In The Claims:

1. (currently amended) A system for automatically classifying a list of telephone numbers into one or more categories, the system comprising:

a processor;

a data storage medium for at least temporarily storing the list of telephone numbers;

means for accessing a telephone network; and

at least one computer readable medium operatively coupled with said processor and said data storage medium; said at least one computer readable medium comprising: software operative on said processor to:

   a) software configured to initiate Initiate a first series of calls to telephone numbers from the list of telephone numbers on a line within said telephone network;

   b) software configured to play Play an audible message over said line that requests that a callee on said line terminate said call;

   c) software configured to identify Identify whether or not said call has been terminated after said audible message is played; and

   d) software configured to classify Classify a telephone number as having been live-answered if said call was terminated in response to said audible message or classify a telephone number as not live-answered if said call was not terminated in response to said audible message.

2. (currently amended) The system of claim 1 further comprising wherein said software is further operative on said processor configured to create a data file comprising said telephone numbers and the identity of each of said telephone numbers as having been live-answered or not live-answered.

3. (currently amended) The system of claim 2 further comprising wherein said software is further operative on said processor configured to generate reports based on said data file.

   4. (cancelled)

   5. (cancelled)

   6. (cancelled)

7. (cancelled)

8. (currently amended) The system of claim 1 further comprising wherein said software is further operative on said processor configured to identify special information tones on said line after initiating said calls.

9. (currently amended) The system of claim 8 further comprising wherein said software is further operative on said processor configured to classify said telephone numbers as not live-answered when said special information tones are identified.

10. (currently amended) The system of claim 2 further comprising wherein said software is further operative on said processor configured to initiate a second series of calls to said not live-answered telephone numbers on a line within said telephone network and receive audible sounds on said line.

11. (currently amended) The system of claim 10 further comprising wherein said software is further operative on said processor configured to receive and identify audible sounds on said line and compare said audible sounds to one or more known audible sounds to sub-classify said not live-answered telephone numbers.

12. (original) The system of claim 11 wherein said known audible sounds are comprised of at least portions of spoken messages.

13. (original) The system of claim 12 wherein said spoken messages are comprised of separate messages advising that a telephone number is disconnected, has been changed, or is privacy blocked.

14. (original) The system of claim 12 wherein said spoken messages are comprised of separate messages advising that all circuits are busy or that an area code has changed.

15. (original) The system of claim 12 wherein said spoken messages are comprised of common corporate and answering system greetings.

16. (currently amended) The system of claim 11 further comprising wherein said software is further operative on said processor configured to identify and classify a telephone number from which audible sounds are received that are not similar to said one or more known audible sounds.

17. (currently amended) The system of claim 11 further comprising wherein said software is further operative on said processor configured to create a data file comprising said

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not live-answered telephone numbers and a sub-classification for each of said not live-answered telephone numbers based on said one or more known audible sounds.

18. (currently amended) The system of claim 17 ~~further comprising~~ wherein said software ~~is further operative on said processor~~ configured to generate reports based on said data file.

19. (currently amended) The system of claim 1 ~~further comprising~~ wherein said software ~~is further operative on said processor~~ configured to at least temporarily store said audible sounds received over said line on said data storage medium prior to identifying said audible sounds.

20. (currently amended) The system of claim 19 ~~further comprising~~ wherein said software ~~is further operative on said processor~~ configured to complete said call after receiving and storing said audible sounds but prior to identifying said audible sounds.

21. (cancelled)

22. (cancelled)

23. (currently amended) The system of claim 20 ~~further comprising~~ wherein said software ~~is further operative on said processor~~ configured to classify said telephone numbers as live-answered if said call recipient provides said specific response.

24. (currently amended) The system of claim 20 ~~further comprising~~ wherein said software ~~is further operative on said processor~~ configured to classify said telephone numbers as not live-answered if said callee does not provide said specific response.

25. (currently amended) The system of claim 19 ~~further comprising~~ wherein said software ~~is further operative on said processor~~ configured to identify special information tones on said line after initiating said calls.

26. (currently amended) The system of claim 25 ~~further comprising~~ wherein said software ~~is further operative on said processor~~ configured to classify said telephone numbers as not live-answered when said special information tones are identified.

27. (currently amended) The system of claim 24 ~~further comprising~~ wherein said software ~~is further operative on said processor~~ configured to compare said audible sounds to one or more known audible sounds to sub-classify said not live-answered telephone number.

28. (original) The system of claim 27 wherein said known audible sounds are comprised of at least portions of spoken messages.